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C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 005172

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARP AND EB/ESC

TREASURY FOR OGC - AUFHAUSER AND OFAC - NEWCOMB

E.O. 12958: DECL: (27 NOVEMBER 2012)

TAGS: ETTC EFIN PTER PREL KU

SUBJECT: TERRORIST FINANCE - KUWAIT: STATUS OF GRF

FREEZE REQUEST

REF: STATE 216024 AND PREVIOUS

1.(U) Classified by Deputy Chief of Mission Frank C. Urbancic for reasons 1.5 (B) and (D).

12. (U) This is an interim response to reftel.

3.(C) Embassy had alerted the GOK to the GRF asset freeze on October 20, but despite repeated attempts, Embassy was only recently able to get the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to confirm that it had forwarded the request for a freeze to the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK). Embassy reminded the MFA that the request for the freeze action was accompanied by a request for information on any assets found and/or frozen; the MFA said it would follow up again with the CBK. Post has not yet been able to confirm that the CBK has received the order, nor whether the CBK has issued a circular to banks and financial institutions to serach for and freeze any GRF accounts.

4.(C) Ambassador raised this issue in a November 19 meeting with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sheikh Dr. Mohammed Al-Sabah, pointing out that such delays defeated the purpose of such freeze actions. Attributing the delay to bureaucratic error, Dr. Mohammed agreed that in a world where money can be moved in an instant, swift action was required. He indicated he would follow up to ensure that future requests were acted upon in a more timely manner.

5.(C) Embassy will continue to follow up with the CBK and MFA to determine the existence and status of any GRF accounts in Kuwait.

JONES